
STEWARDSHIP

Offertory Program



A program offered by the
Diocese of Madison

Overview

The Stewardship Offertory Program is designed to assist a parish to increase its weekly offertory and enhance its year-round stewardship efforts. An array of *à la carte* activities are suggested. If parishioners historically respond better in certain ways and not in others, consider concentrating efforts more in one area and not another. By following all the techniques, as outlined below, a more personalized ask can be made to a majority of parishioners. The end result should be increased weekly offertory numbers and involvement at the parish throughout the year.

The Diocese of Madison Office of Stewardship and Development hopes to partner with you during this program to ensure the program runs smoothly and effectively.

Stewardship Offertory Program Outline

1. Begin with Prayer
2. Explain the Why
3. Create a plan
 - a. Select the activities that will be performed from the *à la carte* list
 - b. Use the calendar as a guide to plan for and keep the stewardship program on track
4. Personal Visits
 - a. Consider making personal visits to top 15% of givers to your parish
5. Direct Mail Appeal
 - a. Send to all remaining households
6. In-Pew Appeal
 - a. Capture new parishioners, anyone who did not respond to direct mail
 - b. Lay witness talks
7. Social media/Email awareness
8. Events
 - a. Event ideas
 - b. Event details
9. Advent/Lenten Challenges
10. Video

The Diocese of Madison Office of Stewardship and Development offers samples/templates for materials to use with this program. Details and where the materials are located is provided below:

1. Sample Prayers
 - a. Options included in this packet – website**
2. Personal Visit
 - a. Ask Letter – website**
 - b. Customizable pledge card – website**
 - c. Prayer card – Office of Stewardship and Development*
3. Direct Mail
 - a. Segmented Letters – website**
 - b. Customizable pledge card – website**
 - c. Prayer card – Office of Stewardship and Development*
 - d. Bulletin Announcements/Prayers of the Faithful – website**
4. In-Pew Appeal
 - a. Pledge card – Office of Stewardship and Development*
 - b. Sample lay witness talk – website**
 - c. Prayer card – Office of Stewardship and Development*
 - d. Bulletin Announcements/Prayers of the Faithful – website**
5. Social Media/Email
 - a. Facebook posts – Office of Stewardship and Development*
 - b. Email Wording – website and on Flocknote**
6. Events
 - a. Invite template – Office of Stewardship and Development*
7. Advent/Lenten Challenge
 - a. Office of Stewardship and Development*
8. Additional Info
 - a. Offertory Program Calendar – website**
 - b. Bulletin Announcements/Prayers of the Faithful – website**
 - c. Thank you letter template – website**
 - d. Reminder letter with new giving amount – website**

*To utilize already created materials, please notify the Office of Stewardship and Development. The office will customize the materials on your behalf.

**Access any website materials by visiting www.madisondiocese.org/Offertory. Feel free to download and customize to the parish.

Parish Responsibilities

The parish priest(s) should lead the Stewardship Offertory Program to ensure a successful campaign.

Identify a lead parish staff/volunteer person to head up the offertory program to:

- a. Schedule a training with the staff/volunteers led by the Diocese of Madison
- b. Coordinate all communication on the program
- c. Arrange volunteers to assist with running the program
- d. Assign parishioner lists for personal visits
- e. Create materials used to educate and communicate with parishioners
- f. Work with the diocesan office of Stewardship and Development throughout the program
- g. Train a parish staff member or volunteer to assist in entering pledge/commitment cards
- h. Ensure enough staff/volunteers are in place to timely acknowledge parishioner gifts
- i. Create a calendar to incorporate your offertory/stewardship activities. Ideally, work backwards from when you want to be finished.
- j. If a percentage of your parishioners are Hispanic/Latino, involve someone from the Hispanic/Latino community into your planning and modify this program to meet their needs.

The parish should put forth their best effort to ensure a successful offertory program. The more effort put forth, the better the results.

Consider evaluating the parish hospitality program to identify any areas that might be enhanced prior to or in tandem with implementing the Stewardship Offertory Program.

This program is designed to be customized by the parish. You can choose what you would like to implement, including the overall process and materials. If you do not want to make personal visits with parishioners, you do not have to, you will then begin with either the direct mail or in-pew process. The more you do, the more engagement with parishioners you will have.

1. Begin with Prayer

As with everything we do, we should always begin all meetings, meals, events, and visits with prayer. Prayer centers us to what is truly important in our everyday lives. Keeping Jesus Christ in our thoughts and actions keeps all of us focused on Him and not ourselves.

The following prayers can be used in all stewardship offertory efforts, or select a unique prayer. Provide the chosen prayer to all of your parishioners on a printed/laminated card or include it in print materials. Encourage parishioners to pray the prayer at least once per day in support of your parish.

Stewardship Prayer Option 1

Gracious and loving God, You call us to be stewards of Your abundance, the caretakers of all you have entrusted to us. Help us to always use Your gifts wisely and teach us to share them generously. Send the Holy Spirit to work through us, bringing Your message to those we serve.

Stewardship Prayer Option 2

Almighty and ever-faithful Lord,
gratefully acknowledging Your mercy
and humbly admitting our need,
we pledge our trust in You and each other.

Filled with desire,
we respond to Your call for discipleship
by shaping our lives in imitation of Christ.
We profess that the call requires us
to be stewards of Your gifts.
As stewards, we receive Your gifts gratefully,
cherish and tend them in a responsible manner,
share them in practice and love with others,
and return them with increase to the Lord.

We pledge to our ongoing formation as stewards
and our responsibility to call others to that same endeavor.
Almighty and ever-faithful God,
it is our fervent hope and prayer
that You who have begun this good work in us
will bring it to fulfillment in Jesus Christ,
our Lord. Amen

Additional prayers are available on the website www.madisondiocese.org/Offertory.

2. Explain the Why

The goal of a Stewardship Offertory Program is to increase the Sunday collection at the parish. Communicating a clear goal for the Stewardship Offertory Program is essential because it provides a shared understanding of what stewardship is and why it matters to staff, volunteers, and parishioners. It will help parishioners to understand how their financial and spiritual gifts will benefit the parish.

To explain the desire to increase the Sunday collection, consider including the following topics in face-to-face visits, homilies, print materials, videos, or social media:

- The strengths of the parish
- Any significant challenges the parish is facing
- The important ministries and programs of the parish
- Highlight the impact of the ministries and programs make on the parish community

3. Create a Plan

Work backwards from when parishioners start their giving. The table below is a suggested list of activities to be performed based on a January 1 giving date start.

Recommended Completion	Date of Completion	Activity	Person Responsible
January 1 st		Parishioners begin new giving level	
Minus 1 ½ to 2 weeks		Send a letter reminding parishioners of new giving level and date to begin	
Minus 2 weeks		Create social media/email reminders	
Minus 4 weeks		Send a thank you letter to anyone giving during in-pew process	
Minus 5 weeks		Conduct in-pew process	
Minus 6 weeks		Create social media/email reminders	
Minus ? weeks		Conducting events? Fit them into the calendar	
Minus 8 weeks		Modify/create and print in-pew process materials	
Minus 8 weeks		Identify a parishioner to give a lay witness talk at all Masses	
Minus 9 weeks		Send thank you to anyone giving during direct mail phase	

Minus 9 weeks		"Close" direct mail phase by determining how many parishioners still have not participated	
Minus 10 weeks		Create social media/email reminders	
Minus 11 weeks		Send direct mail envelope to any parishioners who have not given through face-to-face asks	
Minus ? weeks		Conducting events? Fit them into the calendar	
Minus 12 weeks		Finish face-to-face questions and create a mailing list of who to send direct mail envelopes to.	
Minus 15 weeks		Begin face-to-face asks	
Minus 16 weeks		Create list of face-to-face asks with amounts determined	
Minus 17 weeks		Enlist volunteers to assist with face-to-face asks	
Minus 19 weeks		Create a video to assist with "telling the story" of the parish	
Minus 19 weeks		Create materials needed for all phases of the program	
Minus 19 weeks		Create calendar of to-do activities	
Minus 19 weeks		Identify lead person orchestrating the program	
Minus 20+ weeks		Conduct training with the Diocesan Office of Stewardship and Development	

4. Personal Visits

The Sunday collection is a vital part of the operations of the parish. This is how the parish keeps their lights on, heats or cools the church and offices, pays its staff, and performs the many ministries. The opportunity to invite parishioners to participate in the Sunday collection and review their giving on an annual basis is vital to the health of the parish.

The role a parish plays in the parishioner's life cannot be stressed enough. The parish and parish priest(s) have most likely been there for all the Sacraments in the parishioner's life. The Church has been there from conception to natural death and everything in-between. All of this is not possible without a parish and priest to perform the Sacraments and ministries.

It is important to remember that people want to be asked, they do not always give just to give. A personal visit gives the opportunity to highlight the significance and importance of the parish in the parishioners' lives. People want to be part of a loving and caring community who all are involved in the support of their Church. They want to know others support the Church as well.

The personal visits are the first step in renewing the Sunday collection. These one-on-one visits should provide the parishioners with the information they need to discern their giving and prayerfully make a decision. A parishioner should not be forced to make a decision on the spot; they should take the opportunity to pray about their support.

The parish should first determine how many personal visits (e.g., approximately 15% of top givers) can be accomplished and find volunteers to assist in making those visits. A timeline will need to be set for when the visits should be accomplished, and volunteers should check in with a designated staff person to communicate how the visits are progressing. Finally, if there are any questions that come up during the meeting, volunteers should communicate any follow up.

The following are steps to help make a successful personal visit:

1. Review your own Sunday collection amount and increase your gift if possible.
2. Obtain a list of parishioners to meet with from the parish staff.
3. Call to set up a meeting, when calling, make sure to announce yourself as a parishioner from _____ Church. Tell them you have been asked to assist Fr. _____ in meeting with parishioners to communicate the state of _____ parish and the impact they can have in the future of the parish.
4. Set up a time and place to meet.
5. Ensure you have materials to present to the parishioners. Included in the packet should be a letter and pledge/commitment card with a return envelope, a brochure highlighted the ministries financially supported, a prayer card, or any other token of appreciation the parish feels is appropriate.
6. When meeting with a fellow parishioner, first invite them to pray with you. Then thank them for their support of the parish. Share all the good work being accomplished by the parish and what the future will bring. You are there to present the parishioner with the information they will need to pray about their donation. Do not push them to make a decision on the spot. Ask them to pray about it.

7. Make sure to leave the folder behind and offer to stop back in a week or set up a date to pick up their envelope with the pledge/commitment card enclosed. If the parishioner prefers, they can mail it or drop it at the parish office.
8. After your visit, send a personal thank you card showing your appreciation for their time in meeting with you.
9. Do not forget to follow up with any parishioner who has not responded to your face-to-face visit.

SAMPLE FACE-TO-FACE ASK LETTER

Date

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (Parishioner Name),

Thank you for taking the time to meet with (Volunteer(s) Name) and learn more about the current financial state of (Parish Name) as well as the new ministries and initiatives we hope to put into place through our Stewardship Offertory Program. Your leadership in our parish has helped to make it what it is today and for that, I am truly grateful.

Currently, we are in the process of having all of our parishioners take a look at their weekly giving. I count you among one of (Parish Name)'s strongest supporters. Your past generosity is a testament to your faith and commitment to our parish community – thank you for all you have done to help our parish get to where it is today. As we ask parishioners to evaluate their giving, I would like to share a few of the new initiatives that we would like to implement with your gift. **(Use this space to highlight initiatives or ministries).**

Today, I invite you to continue to invest in our parish community. I ask that you prayerfully consider a weekly gift of (\$\$) to our parish offertory. With your gift, we can continue to build on the ministries that make our parish so great. Please take some time to prayerfully consider my request and return the enclosed commitment card.

Thank you for all you do for our parish. I am grateful for your prayerful consideration of my request. If you have any questions or need to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to call the parish office.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor Signature

SAMPLE PRAYER CARD

Almighty and ever-faithful Lord,

Gratefully acknowledging Your mercy
and humbly admitting our need,
we pledge our trust in You and each other.

Filled with desire,
we respond to Your call for discipleship
by shaping our lives in imitation of Christ.
We profess that the call requires us
to be stewards of Your gifts.
As stewards, we receive Your gifts gratefully,
cherish and tend them in a responsible
manner,
share them in practice and love with others,
and return them with increase to the Lord.

We pledge to our ongoing formation as
stewards
and our responsibility to call others to that
same endeavor.
Almighty and ever-faithful God,
it is our fervent hope and prayer
that You who have begun this good work in us
will bring it to fulfillment in Jesus Christ,
our Lord.

Amen

Add your Parish Logo or or Offertory theme
here

Address

Phone

Email/Website

SAMPLE CUSTOMIZABLE PLEDGE CARD

Parish Name ADDRESS/PHONE/EMAIL <Constituent ID-internal code> <Name line> <Address1> <Address2> <City> <State> <Zip> Card Number _____ Exp Date _____ CVV Code _____ Name on Card _____ <input type="checkbox"/> EFT (include voided check) <input type="checkbox"/> Contact me about including PARISH NAME in my will	RECURRING GIFT \$ _____/mo. To set up a recurring gift via credit card or EFT, fill out the monthly dollar amount and ALSO the information on the left, or visit (WEBSITE). _____ Please select gift amount: <input type="checkbox"/> \$200.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 50.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Please select payment interval: <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually TOTAL GIFT: \$ _____
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Consider using this space in the following ways:

Highlight ways to give

Consider adding your stewardship prayer

Highlight ministries this will support

Talk about Planned Giving

Any other additional info you think should be highlighted

5. Direct Mail Process

The direct mail materials should be sent to any parishioners who did not receive a personal visit. The communication materials for this process must be more succinct and communicate why the parishioner is receiving the mailing and what you are requesting from them.

Some of the people receiving the mailing are not regular Mass goers, so the need to segment parishioners for this mailing is very important. Do not assume everyone is in the same situation both spiritually and financially.

Segmentation of your current parishioner giving is part of a successful offertory program. The office of Stewardship and Development is happy to work with you in reviewing your current parishioner offertory giving. They will assist in making recommendations on how to segment your parishioner list as well as how much to request on the parishioner pledge/commitment card. For non-givers to your parish, consider requesting a small amount, for instance, 1% or 2% of their bi-weekly salary.

This mailing should be sent to all active households in your database who have not already made a commitment to the parish for the upcoming year. Ensure you are inviting everyone to participate in supporting the parish. The timing of your direct mail should allow for anyone wishing to send in their pledge/commitment card to do so prior to conducting the in-pew process. Usually, this mailing would take place approximately 3 weeks prior to the in-pew process.

The mail package should include:

- Personalized letter – can be separate or part of the brochure
- Brochure highlighting ministries the parish financially supports
- Pledge/Commitment Card with personalized ask amount
- Return envelope
- Prayer card or other keepsake item

Do not forget about those people who are giving electronically through Pushpay. You want to include them in your offertory program. When mailing to those individuals, create a personalized commitment card. Instead of giving them dollar amounts to increase to, give them percentage options.

Example increased percentage options:

- Current giving is \$100.00/month
- ☐ 5% increase or \$105.00/month
- ☐ 10% increase or \$110.00/month
- ☐ 15% increase or \$115.00/month
- ☐ 20% increase or \$120.00/month
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ No Change to monthly giving

These parishioners should receive everything mentioned above. However, instead of the pledge/commitment card, include a commitment card as identified above.

Enhance your direct mail with bulletin announcements and Prayers of the Faithful which are located on the diocesan website.

SAMPLE SEGMENTED LETTER for a life-long parish member

Date

(Name)

(Address)

(CSZ)

Dear (Parishioner Name),

Take a minute to think about all the important moments in your life that have taken place in your parish. From baptism and marriages, to saying goodbye to loved ones, (Parish Name) has been a backdrop for so many significant milestones in your life. As you contemplate those moments, it gives me an opportunity to ask all of our parishioners to take a look at how they support (Parish Name) financially in a very intentional way. (Parish Name) will be kicking off our parish Stewardship Offertory Program over the next few weeks with the goal of encouraging intentional, sustained giving from our entire community in gratitude for God's blessings to our parish family.

There are so many areas in which our parish thrives and I am proud that we have been able to accomplish so much, but my hope in launching this stewardship offertory program is to move our parish away from just simply paying the bills and keeping the lights on to being able to invest in the spiritual health of (Parish Name), as well. A few ministries and programs that I would like to be able to implement or expand upon are,...**Use this space to make a wish list of areas that you would like to implement if you had additional money or that parishioners have asked about in the past.** Please know, as I make this request our parish leadership has looked at budgets to ensure that we are using what is so generously given to us wisely. At this point though, the only way we can expand our ministries to meet the needs of our parish community is to increase our offertory.

Our records show that your family contributed \$_____ to (Parish Name) last year, and I am so grateful for your generosity. I am asking for you to take some time to prayerfully consider increasing that amount for this year. I invite you to fill out the enclosed pledge card with the amount that you are able to give, consider giving a weekly or monthly gift if you are more comfortable with that. Once completed, please return this card to the parish office so that we are able to plan for the year ahead. As always, if you prefer to set up an automatic gift online, you can do so by visiting (website).

I want to thank you for your support and for being part of the (Parish Name) community, a community which I am blessed to serve. May God continue to bless you and your family.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Pastor Signature

SAMPLE PRAYER CARD

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and humbly admitting our need,
we pledge our trust in You and each other.

Filled with desire,
we respond to Your call for discipleship
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cherish and tend them in a responsible
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We pledge to our ongoing formation as
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Almighty and ever-faithful God,
it is our fervent hope and prayer
that You who have begun this good work in us
will bring it to fulfillment in Jesus Christ,
our Lord.

Amen

Add your Parish Logo or or Offertory theme
here

Address

Phone

Email/Website

SAMPLE SEGMENTED PLEDGE CARD

<p>Parish Name</p> <p>ADDRESS/PHONE/EMAIL</p> <p><Constituent ID-internal code></p> <p><Name line></p> <p><Address1></p> <p><Address2></p> <p><City> <State> <Zip></p> <p>Card Number _____</p> <p>Exp Date _____ CVV Code _____</p> <p>Name on Card _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> EFT (include voided check)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Contact me about including PARISH NAME in my will</p>	<p>RECURRING GIFT \$ _____/mo.</p> <p>To set up a recurring gift via credit card or EFT, fill out the monthly dollar amount and ALSO the information on the left, or visit (WEBSITE).</p> <hr/> <p>Please select gift amount:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$200.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$150.00</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 50.00</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____</p> <p>Please select payment interval:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually</p> <p>TOTAL GIFT: \$ _____</p>
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Consider using this space in the following ways:

Highlight ways to give

Consider adding your stewardship prayer

Highlight ministries this will support

Talk about Planned Giving

Any other additional info you think should be highlighted

SAMPLE BROCHURE

+








Add images from your parish and add your parish prayer on this panel

HOW TO MAKE YOUR COMMITMENT

Fill out and return the enclosed commitment card

Make your gift online by visiting (Parish Website)

CONTACT US

✉ 404 E Main St. Madison, WI 53703

☎ 608-257-5000

✉ Email@cathedralparish.org

🌐 madisoncathedral.org



Increased Offertory Program

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace
Genesis 1:28

MY FELLOW PARISHIONERS,

During this time, I am asking that all of us, individually, and as a parish community consider the gifts that God has given to us, then take some time to reflect upon the amount you return in gratitude for those gifts. In hopes of continuing to meet the spiritual needs of our parish while also expanding the important ministries and programs that are so important to keeping us a vibrant parish community.

The following pages of this brochure will lay out our proposed budget for the upcoming year, the breakdown of contributions we are currently receiving, suggested weekly offerings based off of your annual family income and also a list of ministries/areas we could like to improve upon with increased giving. I ask you to take some time to review, pray, and commit to a weekly level of support that you feel comfortable with to achieve the advancement of (Parish Name). If each parishioner gives something, we can put (Parish Name) in a good financial place now, and ensure that we are setting up for future success, as well.

Enclosed you will find a commitment card, that I invite you to fill out indicating your weekly giving amount, or, if you would prefer to give online with a credit card or directly from your bank account, visit, (Parish website)

God Bless,

Signature

Cathedral Parish Proposed Budget and Wishlist Fiscal Year 20__

Expenses	Budgeted Amount
Salaries + Benefits	\$
Operations	\$
Parish Expenses	\$
Educational Expenses	\$
Expense	\$
Expense	\$

With an increase in Offertory, we would like to implement and improve upon these areas:

-
-
-
-
-
-

Average Weekly Contributions by number of households

# of Households	Amount/week
20	Less than \$1/wk.
20	\$2-\$10/wk
20	\$11-\$20/wk
20	\$21-30/wk

How Much Should We Give? Suggested Weekly Offering

Annual Family Income	5%	10%
50,000		
60,000		
70,000		
80,000		

Bulletin Announcements

Weekend Before Direct Mail

We are excited to announce the launch of our parish Stewardship Offertory Program! Keep an eye on your mailbox this coming week for your packet, which will include information about our parish financials, ministries, and more, along with a commitment card for you to fill out. Please take some time to review these materials and prayerfully discern what you are able to give - your willingness to respond will help us plan for the year ahead. Thank you in advance for your support.

Weekends in between Direct Mail and In-Pew

By now, you should have received your Stewardship Offertory Program information in the mail. Please take some time over the next few weeks to review this and consider what your financial commitment could be. Through this program, we are asking all parishioners to take a look at how they support (Parish Name) financially in a very intentional way. Set aside some time to think about the ministries you and your family have utilized while being members at (Parish Name) and also what ministries you would like to see (Parish Name) implement into our community. If you have already returned your commitment card, thank you, if not, please mail it in or bring with you to Mass next weekend.

Prayers of the Faithful

Use Throughout Direct Mail/In-Pew Process

- In gratitude for the generosity of the parishioners of __ (CHURCH/PARISH NAME) __ as we discern how we can support all the operations and ministries provided. We Pray...
- We give thanks for the blessings you have bestowed upon us. As we discern our offering to our church/parish, we do so with grateful hearts. May these gifts be used to further your kingdom. We Pray...
- As we come before the Lord with joyful hearts, eager to give back a portion of what you have given us, may our sacrifice be a blessing to others as they have been to us. We Pray...
- We give in faith, trusting that you will provide for all of our needs. Use this offertory program to further your work and bring hope to those who need it most. We Pray...
- We come before you with humble hearts, offering what we can. May these gifts be pleasing in your sight and used to further your kingdom here at ____ (CHURCH/PARISH NAME) _____. We Pray...
- Help us to be good stewards of the resources you have given us. May our discernment of our offering be a reflection of our commitment to you. We Pray...
- We pray for generous hearts. Help us to give freely and joyfully, knowing that everything we have is a gift from you. We Pray...

6. In-Pew Process

The in-pew process should look and feel very familiar to your parish. The in-pew process can be conducted similarly to the Annual Catholic Appeal. The in-pew process should be used to catch anyone who has yet to participate in this program, including people who have not yet registered at the parish, hopefully a much smaller group of people.

This process will be conducted approximately 3 weeks after the direct mail process. This will allow enough time for parishioners receiving the direct mail to pray about their commitment and send it back to the parish. During the time between the direct mail and in-pew process, use social media, email, Altar and bulletin announcements to promote your Stewardship Offertory Program to keep the process present in the mind of the parishioner.

Prior to conducting the in-pew process, ensure you have enough pledge/commitment cards, envelopes and pencils available. Consider using someone from the parish to speak favorably about the ministries the parish supports. This should not be a long speech, a couple of minutes at most. Ideally this will be done during the homily portion of the Mass. This is not a time to read the financial report to the congregation. Rather, it is an opportunity to share the good news happening at the parish.

Once the speaker has concluded, the priest should conduct the in-pew process. They are the leader of the parish and parishioners will respond to the priest. This is the person they recognize more than any other person at the parish.

If personal visits and direct mail have been conducted, the in-pew process ideally will not take much time as the focus is to engage any parishioners that have not yet responded to the parish's request.

The priest should explain why they are asking for support from everyone, no matter what they are able to financially do. The priest should also ask everyone to pray for the parish as well as the ministries supported by the parish. He then should proceed to ask anyone who has not yet had the opportunity to complete a pledge/commitment card to complete one, making sure he stresses that no money is needed at this time, but this is intended to give the parish an idea of how much they can expect from parishioners over the next year. He does not need to walk through the card but should keep people focused on the card versus just sitting down and letting them figure out what to do next. Once he sees most have finished, he should have the ushers collect them.

There is no need to conduct a follow-up in-pew process the next weekend unless it is determined that the results were not what the parish expected.

All in-pew cards should be kept secured and given to the staff coordinator as soon as possible.

Ensure any new people captured through this process receive a personal phone call or letter/note welcoming them to the parish and thanking them for their support.

Enhance your in-pew process with bulletin announcements and Prayers of the Faithful, located on the diocesan website.

Lay Witness Talks

The lay witness talk can be used during the in-pew process or in a weekend leading to the in-pew process. This can also be used during an event or, if applicable, you can “carve” out a portion of the lay witness talk and post it to social media or using a smart phone, video the talk and send via an email blast. This is a valuable way to communicate with parishioners, choose someone who has been directly impacted or has an impactful story to share. The power of hearing a first-hand account of how parishioner’s money will be used can make a big difference in how people feel about supporting your parish.

Find a ministry that your parish conducts, versus a ministry your parish only supplies the workers for. Why? If you are only serving a meal, for instance, at a local shelter, a parishioner might think, why don’t I just support the shelter? It is not costing the parish anything to supply workers, it is costing the shelter for supplying the meal. You want to find impact, consider a ministry or program that has a direct impact because of their financial support.

Here are a few examples of impactful ministries:

Catholic Schools – have a student talk about their school

Pro-Life Ministries – find someone who either performed or received a service or support

OCIA – a person coming into the Catholic church or someone who recently was initiated

Hispanic Ministry – what does your parish do to support their Hispanic/Latino community

Other ministries or programs in your parish

Here are a few talking points for your lay witness speaker to touch on:

How the ministry or program has impacted their life

How they support this parish (financially, spiritually, and volunteer)

Why they are involved in the ministry or program

How others can support the ministry or program

SAMPLE IN-PEW PLEDGE CARD

Parish Name ADDRESS/PHONE/EMAIL <Constituent ID-internal code> <Name line> <Address1> <Address2> <City> <State> <Zip> Card Number _____ Exp Date _____ CVV Code _____ Name on Card _____ <input type="checkbox"/> EFT (include voided check) <input type="checkbox"/> Contact me about including PARISH NAME in my will	RECURRING GIFT \$ _____/mo. To set up a recurring gift via credit card or EFT, fill out the monthly dollar amount and ALSO the information on the left, or visit (WEBSITE). _____ Please select gift amount: <input type="checkbox"/> \$200.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$150.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 50.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25.00 <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Please select payment interval: <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Annually TOTAL GIFT: \$ _____
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<p>Consider using this space in the following ways:</p> <p>Highlight ways to give</p> <p>Consider adding your stewardship prayer</p> <p>Highlight ministries this will support</p> <p>Talk about Planned Giving</p> <p>Any other additional info you think should be highlighted</p>
--

SAMPLE PRAYER CARD

Almighty and ever-faithful Lord,

Gratefully acknowledging Your mercy
and humbly admitting our need,
we pledge our trust in You and each other.

Filled with desire,
we respond to Your call for discipleship
by shaping our lives in imitation of Christ.
We profess that the call requires us
to be stewards of Your gifts.
As stewards, we receive Your gifts gratefully,
cherish and tend them in a responsible
manner,
share them in practice and love with others,
and return them with increase to the Lord.

We pledge to our ongoing formation as
stewards
and our responsibility to call others to that
same endeavor.
Almighty and ever-faithful God,
it is our fervent hope and prayer
that You who have begun this good work in us
will bring it to fulfillment in Jesus Christ,
our Lord.

Amen

Add your Parish Logo or or Offertory theme
here

Address

Phone

Email/Website

Stewardship Offertory Program Bulletin Announcements

Weekend Before In-Pew

Next Weekend, Father/Msgr. (Name) will be talking about our Stewardship Offertory Program, he will be highlighting some of our parish ministries and asking for your support and financial commitment to (Parish Name) for the year. For more information, please review your packet you should have received in the mail a few weeks ago in. This will be a time to learn more about the important ministries we have in our parish and give you the opportunity to commit to giving. Thank you for your generous participation.

Commitment Weekend + Beyond

Thank you! Thank you for participating in our Stewardship Offertory Program! Your commitments will help us plan for the year ahead and help us to grow the ministries here at (Parish Name). We are inspired by the generosity of so many. Your participation in the life of the parish and your grateful response provides a witness to us all on how to respond as stewards. If you have not had a chance to fill out and return your commitment card, there is still time. Please send in your card to the parish offices or place in the offertory basket.

Prayers of the Faithful

Use Throughout Direct Mail/In-Pew Process

- In gratitude for the generosity of the parishioners of __ (CHURCH/PARISH NAME) __ as we discern how we can support all the operations and ministries provided. We Pray...
- We give thanks for the blessings you have bestowed upon us. As we discern our offering to our church/parish, we do so with grateful hearts. May these gifts be used to further your kingdom. We Pray...
- As we come before the Lord with joyful hearts, eager to give back a portion of what you have given us, may our sacrifice be a blessing to others as they have been to us. We Pray...
- We give in faith, trusting that you will provide for all of our needs. Use this offertory program to further your work and bring hope to those who need it most. We Pray...
- We come before you with humble hearts, offering what we can. May these gifts be pleasing in your sight and used to further your kingdom here at __ (CHURCH/PARISH NAME) __. We Pray...
- Help us to be good stewards of the resources you have given us. May our discernment of our offering be a reflection of our commitment to you. We Pray...
- We pray for generous hearts. Help us to give freely and joyfully, knowing that everything we have is a gift from you. We Pray...

7. Social Media/Email Awareness

Email

Flocknote or any email communication tool can be utilized as a method for communicating with parishioners about the Stewardship Offertory Program. Sample wording for emails is available on the Diocesan website at www.madisondiocese.org/Offertory.

Social Media

Social media is a valuable asset for sharing the good work and active ministries in the parish. It should be one tool in your communication toolbox. You need someone who is social media savvy and can navigate all types of social media channels. Even if your parish only has one channel of social media, utilize it! Consider posting weekly to keep everyone informed on the parish's overall progress. Here are a few social media post ideas:

Sample Social Media Posts



8. Events

An event can be a great opportunity to bring lots of people together in a casual setting while getting out your message of support. An event does not need to be huge, stressful, or very time-consuming. It can be as simple as donuts and coffee after Mass with someone giving a lay witness talk, or the priest sharing his vision for the parish and how people can financially support the parish to accomplish the vision.

Whatever your event is, keep the focus on prayer and information. You can make it fun, or serious, but do not make it so cumbersome that the focus of the event is lost.

If you conduct an event, have materials available for people to review and/or take home with them. Do not make the event all talk and nothing else. Consider having a Q&A with parish staff or ministry leaders to answer questions. Consider taking this opportunity to solicit ideas from parishioners on new ministries, programs, or ways to enhance existing ones.

Make parishioners feel welcome, heard and included in the life of the parish. Offertory is only one facet of a Stewardship focus. Often some of the best ideas for ministries do not cost the parish anything.

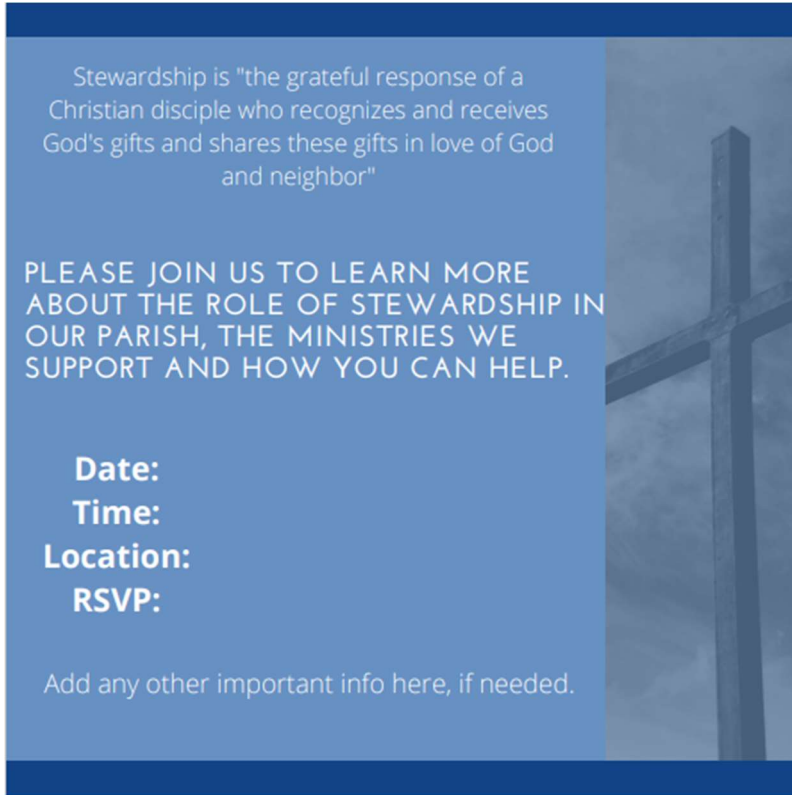
Event Ideas

- After Mass coffee/donuts – learn more about the parish
- Evening wine and cheese event to say thank you and to encourage participation in the offertory program
- Casual dinner or lunch to learn more about the ministries of the parish and how they can make a difference
- Thank you celebration with lay witness talks from people affected by parishioners' support

Event Details

- Determine type of event to host
- Find a location and secure the date
- Plan for food and drink
- Do you need decorations? If so, what kind and purchase, if needed
- Who are you inviting? How many?
- Create and send out invitations, if applicable
- Ensure your "cut off" for reservations allows for you to safely secure the appropriate amount of food/drink
- Who is speaking/presenting at the event, contact them and reserve their time
- Do you need/want name tags?
- Are there any take-a-ways for participants?
- What other details do you need to take care of?

SAMPLE EVENT INVITATION



Stewardship is "the grateful response of a Christian disciple who recognizes and receives God's gifts and shares these gifts in love of God and neighbor"

PLEASE JOIN US TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ROLE OF STEWARDSHIP IN OUR PARISH, THE MINISTRIES WE SUPPORT AND HOW YOU CAN HELP.

Date:
Time:
Location:
RSVP:

Add any other important info here, if needed.

9. Advent/Lenten Reflections

Getting parishioners involved during the two Holy seasons of the Liturgical calendar is an opportunity to bring them closer to Jesus Christ and the life of the parish.

People are always looking for ways to involve themselves through prayer and service to others during Advent and Lent. Creating reflections can provide parishioners with clear ways to increase their prayer life.

Ideally these reflections will be printed on a heavy card stock so people can keep them throughout the Holy season. If you have the ability, feel free to laminate them so they can be used over and over again.

Here are a few ideas for both Advent and Lent. Consider creating unique reflections and changing every year.



10. Video

A video can be very impactful. It can show the vitality of the parish through its ministries and programs as well as parishioners. A video does not have to be professionally made, nor expensive. This is a perfect opportunity to involve a teenager who has experience with producing video content through their smart phone. Most teenagers have this experience and may welcome the opportunity to share their gifts with the parish.

Do not just set them free, give them clear directions as to what video you would like to take. Make sure they have the capacity to get involved when events are happening around the parish. Do not over direct them, let them have some freedom to capture what they see makes your parish vibrant.

Editing will also need clear direction. Ensure the video and any music or voice-over is appropriate for all ages. Keep it simple, you do not need to make it into a movie. The video should be short, no more than 5 minutes. You might even consider having the video produced into short snip-it's that can be emailed or posted on social media.

Whatever you decide to do, keep the message focused on God and not the people. He is the center of all we do, and everything should revolve around Him.

Summary

The Diocese of Madison office of Stewardship and Development is happy to present and train parish staff/volunteers on this Stewardship Offertory Program. We will also work directly with your lead parish staff or volunteer on the best way to segment your donors for an increased gift amount. We are here to help ensure a successful program.

Please contact us with any questions:

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