

STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

2025-2026



LIVING OUR CALL AS DISCIPLES OF CHRIST

“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.” Then the righteous will answer him and say, “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you?” And the king will say to them in reply, “Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.”
Matthew 25: 35-40

“What we love we shall grow to resemble.”

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Corporal Works of Mercy

Feed the hungry
Give drink to the thirsty
Clothe the naked
Visit the imprisoned
Shelter the homeless
Visit the sick
Bury the dead
Care for our Common Home

Feed the Hungry

To feed the hungry is the simplest, most basic, and most essential corporal work of mercy and as Christians we are to feed the hungry wherever we find them.

“For I was hungry and you gave me food.” Matthew 25:35

St. Bernard Parish Options

Prepare casseroles for SHIP (See parish website for SHIP recipes;
drop off is second Sunday of the month at St. Bernard’s)

‘On your Own Ideas’

Send some homemade cookies to a student (not in your family) who is away at college; include a note or card letting them know you will pray for them.

Call a local nursing home and arrange to drop off baked goods or snacks for the residents.

Run a food drive in your neighborhood for the Somerset County Food Bank (must be accompanied by a parent)

Give Drink to the Thirsty

There is a human need for water that is completely independent of the need for food. When we give drink to the thirsty, we provide the stuff of life itself.

“I was thirsty and you gave me drink” Matthew 25:35

St. Bernard Parish Options

Collect money to provide formula for babies at Life Choices

‘On your Own Ideas’

Run a water/beverage drive in your neighborhood for the Somerset County Food Bank (must be accompanied by an adult)

Help to prepare Meals on Wheels (Somerset County Office)

Clothe the Naked

Few people are literally naked, but millions of people own no more clothing than what they wear each day.
“naked and you clothed me” Matthew 25:36

St. Bernard Parish Options

Collect clothing for babies and young children and send it to “Life Choices” in Phillipsburg, NJ

Search your closet and your hear—you may discover you have more than you need; share good clothing with other youth who are not as fortunate as you by donating to SHIP or Catholic Charities

Participate in Advent Giving Tree program and provide Christmas gifts for a family

‘On your Own Ideas’

Purchase and donate clothing items to the Somerset Home for Temporarily Displaced Children. Visit their website for a complete list. www.visionandpathways.org

Visit the Imprisoned

People live in many kinds of prisons, and the corporal work of mercy that encourages us to visit them, can and should, be applied in as many creative ways as possible. Some people today are confined to wheelchairs, hospital beds, and institutional facilities and we are called to reach out to them with love and concern.

“in prison and you visited me.” Matthew 25:36

St. Bernard Parish Options

Help serve HOME of Somerset County, a ministry that helps the homeless in our community. (family activity)

‘On your Own Ideas’

Visit the elderly in nursing homes or hospitals and play a game with them or read to them; call a local nursing home or assisted living facility

Rake leaves or shovel snow for free for an elderly friend or neighbor (not your own family)

Babysit for free for a neighbor or family friend (not your own family)

Shelter the Homeless/Welcome the Stranger

The most important responses we can make to homelessness are those that provide adequate shelter to those who have no home to live in but it remains true that there is such a reality as spiritual homelessness. To be unaware of or alienated from God is to experience a kind of homelessness that can afflict even the most comfortable and the most affluent.

“a stranger and you welcomed me.” Matthew 25:36

St. Bernard Parish Options

Help with HOME: homeless families staying in our Church basement several times throughout the year

Be an usher and welcome parishioners as they arrive for Mass and assist with Mass. Or serve as an usher or greeter at First Penance, First Communion, or Confirmation

Participate with the Gardening Ministry by planting, watering, and weeding on Saturday mornings

‘On your Own Ideas’

Invite someone you don’t know at school to join you for lunch or an activity outside of school, and then write a summary of what happened and illustrate it

Collect baby items from relatives and neighbors and donate to Life Choices or the Center for Great Expectations

Visit the Sick

Not all the sick are in hospitals. Many are in their homes. A person may be sick at home, whether because of old age or a disease, and hardly anyone will come to visit him. Yet, if he is hospitalized for a time, the priest comes to visit, friends, and relatives all come to see him. The sick must be visited wherever they are. There are some people who are "sick" not so much in body, but from social isolation. Many of the elderly in our communities are living apart from their loved ones. "Visiting the sick" in our world can mean reaching out to those in our local nursing homes, those who are "sick at heart" from being lonely and forgotten, regularly deprived "friendship."

“ill and you cared for me” Matthew 25:36

St. Bernard Parish Options

Check the bulletin for any parishioners who may be ill and send a card or remembrance or homemade gift.

‘On your Own Ideas’

Schedule a visit to a nursing home, a home for people who are mentally or physically disabled, or a hospital (you must be accompanied by a parent)

Make gifts to be handed out to senior citizens at one of the senior care facilities in our area (ex: Christmas pins, Easter baskets, St. Patrick’s Day badge, etc.)

If a classmate is injured or seriously ill, take the time to stop at his or her home or send a note; maybe best of all, organize a card from the class—perhaps a huge, poster-size card that incorporates everyone’s extra effort.

Bury the Dead

The bodies of the dead are automatically buried in our society; and no doubt most of us make sure that our relatives and friends have a proper funeral service. But we also need to be aware of the needs of those who are grieving, and struggling to "bury their dead" emotionally. Grieving can be a long process. We need to help one another, truly bury our dead by letting go of them and entrusting our lost loved ones into the hands of our merciful Creator and Savior.

They took the body of Jesus and bound it with burial cloths along with the spices, according to the Jewish burial custom. Now in the place where He had been crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had yet been buried. So they laid Jesus there because of the Jewish preparation day; for the tomb was close by. John 19:40-42

St. Bernard Parish Options

Be an altar server at a funeral Mass

Assist in cleaning up St. Bernard's Cemetery

Attend Mass on All Soul's Day and pray for all those who have passed away

Care for our Common Home

World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation offers individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which He has entrusted to our care, and to implore His help for the protection of creation as well as His pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live.

God gave us the earth "***to cultivate and to care for.***" (Gen. 2:15)

St. Bernard Parish Options

Visit the St. Bernard Website for ministry opportunities
to work with the Green Team.

'On your Own Ideas'

Avoid unnecessarily using plastic or paper for a month. Write a paragraph about how this effort changed behaviors within your household.

Reduce water consumption by turning water off while brushing teeth and taking shorter showers. Turn off unnecessary lights. Lead your family in making these efforts and write a short paragraph about the experience.

Plant a tree or look for opportunities to add plant life to your home.
Take a picture of the tree or plant and write a short paragraph about your thoughts.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Admonish the sinner
Instruct the ignorant
Counsel the doubtful
Comfort the sorrowful
Bear wrongs patiently
Forgive all injuries
Pray for the living and the dead
Care for the common home

Admonish the Sinner

Help people who sin understand and live God's love.

Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Matthew 18:18

St. Bernard Parish Options

Prepare a banner or poster to be carried in the Life Chain; join fellow citizens on the first Sunday of October on Mountain Avenue in Somerville to show your support for the sanctity of life. (you must be accompanied by a parent)

Make a banner or poster to be carried by those attending the annual Mark for Life trip to Washington, DC or Trenton, NJ in mid-January.

Attend an annual March for Life Trip to Washington, DC or Trenton, NJ held in mid-January

‘On your Own Ideas’

Find stories in the current news in which someone has refused to participate in the sins of others; write a short report (2 paragraphs) on the story and your thoughts about how they were treated.

Research and prepare a short report (2 paragraphs) or a poster with examples of your thoughts on any of the following topics: adult and embryonic stem cell use; abortion; euthanasia

Instruct the Ignorant

Help people understand and learn the things of God.

A poor widow also came and put in two small coins, worth a few cents. Calling His disciples to Himself, He said to them, "Amen I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all the other contributors to the treasury. For they all contributed from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, contributed all she had, her whole livelihood." Mark 12:42-44

St. Bernard Parish Options

Be an altar server at Mass or special occasions.

Assist as an aide in a first or second grade classroom during a Faith Formation class other than your own.

Help with the Young Builder's Club gatherings on a Saturday afternoon by setting up, cleaning up, and working with the young builders.

Council the Doubtful

Give good advice to those who are uncertain about what to do.

During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. At once (Jesus) spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how (strong) the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Matthew 14:25-32

St. Bernard Parish Options

Assist at parish social events to serve and help bring parish members together

Be an usher and welcome parishioners as they arrive for Mass; then assist during Mass

Comfort the Sorrowful

Be God's messengers of faith, hope, and love to those who suffer pain caused by injury, loss, despair, loneliness, or rejection.

So when the Jews who were with her in the house, comforting her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw Him, she fell at His feet and said to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her weeping, He became perturbed and deeply troubled, and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Sir, come and see." And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how He loved him." John 11:31-36

St. Bernard Parish Options

Assist at parish social events throughout the year which bring parish members together

Help with HOME of Somerset County—families live in our Church basement several times throughout the year

‘On your Own Ideas’

Make a visit to church (other than Mass) and pray for someone who has died.

Send a note to their family to let them know you are praying.

Bear Wrongs Patiently

Deal kindly with people who do thoughtless things.

While he was still speaking, a crowd approached and in front was one of the Twelve, a man named Judas. He went up to Jesus to kiss him. Jesus said to him, "Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" Luke 22:47-48

St. Bernard Parish Options

Attend an Advent or Lenten Prayer service and reflect on ways to be more accepting of others and to welcome Christ in your daily life

Attend Mass one extra day per week during the year and offer this as an intention for any conflict that is happening among your friends and schoolmates

‘On your Own Ideas’

Commit to reading scripture every day for one month. Keep a daily log and mark off each day you read.

Read a book about a saint (other than the one for your saint poster in 7th grade). Write a short summary of the life of this saint and share one thing that struck you about this saint

Forgive All Injuries

Forgive people who cause pain to you, to others, or to themselves.

This is how you are to pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and do not subject us to the final test, but deliver us from the evil one.” If you forgive others their transgressions, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your transgressions. Matthew 6:9-15

St. Bernard Parish Options

Attend the scheduled Penance services during Advent and Lent

Attend the annual March for Life trip in Trenton, NJ or Washington, DC (you must be accompanied by a parent)

‘On your Own Ideas’

Pray the Rosary together as a family or on your own as a specific intention

Attend confession once a month using the examination of conscience

Pray for the Living and the Dead

Jesus, in the Gospel of Luke, instructs us to express our needs to our Father in heaven, and He says that our prayers will be answered. Prayers for the good of others, both those among the living and the dead can make a difference.

St. Bernard Parish Options

Attend Mass on All Soul’s Day (Nov 2nd) and pray for all those who have passed away

Make homemade cards for those people in the bulletin who are ill and bring the cards to the office to be sent to the families

Attend the yearly Mass for Religious held in February. (7th Graders only)

Attend the monthly Eucharistic Adoration and pray for those who have caused pain to you and to others

‘On your Own Ideas’

Make a Christmas or Easter card for a homebound parishioner

Make a prayer calendar for the month with people to pray for each day. Ask your family and friends if they would like you to pray for them. Mark each day off as you pray

Care for our Common Home

World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation offers individual believers and communities a fitting opportunity to reaffirm their personal vocation to be stewards of creation, to thank God for the wonderful handiwork which he has entrusted to our care, and to implore his help for the protection of creation as well as his pardon for the sins committed against the world in which we live. (Pope Francis, 2014)
God gave us the earth “*to cultivate and care for*” (Gen. 2:15)

‘On your Own Ideas’

Care for our common home calls for a grateful contemplation of God’s world which allows us to discover in each thing a teaching which God wishes to hand on to us.

Display this prayer in your home and ask family members to pray it with you:

*O God of the poor,
Help us to rescue the abandoned And forgotten of this earth,
Who are so precious in your eyes.
God of love, show us our place in this world
As channels of your love
For all the creatures of this earth
God of mercy, may we receive your forgiveness and convey your mercy
throughout our common home.
Praise be to you!
Amen*