

FR. MIKE RITTER

October 31, 2022

Dear Friends:

As our parish Stewardship Commitment Weekend on November 12 and 13 approaches, I hope you are spending some time reflecting on your gratitude to our generous God.

As you know, we have spent considerable time considering the generous nature of our Lord, as well as the appropriate response of gratitude that should accompany the knowledge of God at work in our lives.

While it is God's nature to bless us, He has a far greater purpose in mind than just making us happy – as it is never the Lord's intention for His blessings to end with us. Rather, He wants us to gratefully share His blessings and let them flow out to others as part of His plan for taking care of the whole earth.

That's where you and I come in – as stewards of all God has entrusted to us.

Over the coming weeks, I invite you to prayerfully reflect on the blessings God has entrusted to you, that have opened your heart to the joy of God's love, and then make a commitment to live as a:

STEWARD OF TIME

by making Sunday worship and ongoing formation a priority in your life

For most of us, time is our most valuable commodity. With all of the competing demands in our busy lives, "time for God" doesn't happen unless we make it a priority. St. Robert Parish offers three Masses in English and one in Spanish each weekend, so even those of us with the most demanding of schedules should be able to join in our communal worship.

I also hope you will make a commitment to your own ongoing spiritual formation this year. Our need for formation is not something from which we "graduate" at Confirmation but rather an ongoing opportunity to grow in our faith. Our parish is committed to offering a varied and interesting selection of formation activities – including speakers throughout year – and I hope you will commit to at least one or two in the coming year.

STEWARD OF TALENT

by enriching our parish community with your talents and skills

Through your service, Christ is physically present in our parish. When our parishioners share their talents, we are able to – among other things – celebrate Mass well, visit the sick and elderly, teach our youth about their faith, console the grieving, and welcome new members to our community. I ask you to share whatever talent, skill or passion that God has entrusted to you by joining one of our many parish ministries.

If you are already involved in a ministry, I ask you to renew your commitment to serving for the coming year. Or if you have served in one ministry for a prolonged time, be adventuresome and consider joining a different one. You will have a chance to serve in a new way and meet parishioners you may not know yet. And importantly, you will also give someone new the opportunity to serve!

STEWARD OF TREASURE

by giving to God a significant and sacrificial percentage of the treasure He has provided

We all have different levels of income and different material resources, yet the least affluent among us are rich in comparison to the result of the world, when nearly 700 million people live on \$1.90 a day.

While God does not call us to equal giving, He does call us to equal sacrifice. This requires each of us – myself included – to prioritize expenses and to place God and His work ahead of some of our own wants and desires.

I cannot tell you a “proper” percentage of income to commit to the Lord. For some in our community who have been incredibly blessed, returning to God 10% of what He has given might be too little; for others struggling with foreclosure or job, 10% may be too much. However, considering that the average family spends 5.3% of its income on dining out, 5.1% on entertainment and 4.5% on clothing, I would hope that, for most in our community, a pledge toward God and building His kingdom of 3 to 4% of annual income would be a worthy effort.

As you consider what is an appropriate and generous gift of thanksgiving, I ask you to prayerfully consider where God falls on your own list of spending priorities.

As a parish community, we have spent a great deal of time this fall focusing on gratitude, generosity and how we appropriately say “Thank You” to God for all He provides for us.

Some have asked why this is the case, and they are sometimes taken aback by my answer: We want everyone to experience a personal relationship with God.

When one accepts our Lord’s invitation to a personal friendship, one cannot but help but want to live just as Jesus did: **gratefully recognizing God’s blessings and generously sharing them with others, not out of obligation but out of love for our Lord.**

On the weekend of November 12 and 13 during our parish-wide Stewardship Commitment Weekend, please bring with you to Mass the commitment form included in this mailing. As a parish community, we will collectively present to the Lord our commitments for the coming year as part of the offertory. This will be a powerful witness of our community’s love for God!

We have forms available for both adults and youth, and if you need additional forms, they can be downloaded at www.saintrobertsac.org/stewardship.

As you consider what your stewardship pledge will be this coming year, I invite you embrace and respond to God’s overflowing generosity by being as generous to the Lord as He is to you.

Sincerely in Christ,



Father Michael Ritter